

ALL SOULS COLLEGE CHAPEL

**THREE TRIBUTES GIVEN BY
ROGER WILSON, MARK HASSALL AND
ROGER GOODBURN**

IN MEMORY OF

SHEPPARD SUNDERLAND FRERE CBE

MA (Cantab), LittD (Cantab), DLitt (Oxon),
DLitt (Leeds), DLitt (Leic), DLitt (Kent), FBA

23 August 1916 – 26 February 2015

Vice-president of the Society of Antiquaries, 1962–1966;
President of the Royal Archaeological Institute, 1978–1981;
Professor of the Archaeology of the Roman Empire, 1966–1983;
Fellow of the College;
Emeritus Fellow, All Souls College, 1983–2015

Saturday, 16 May at 2.15 p.m.

Roger Wilson

Sheppard's reputation as a superlative excavator was forged in the post-war excavations of bomb-damaged Canterbury, in what became a pioneering example of urban rescue archaeology prior to modern rebuilding, of the type that was later to develop in many of Britain's leading cities. His digging seasons there lasted from between six and ten weeks every year from 1946 until the mid-1950s, and for shorter periods thereafter until 1960. It was not easy work, much of it conducted by means of small, deep cuttings, but the gains in knowledge were considerable. Quite apart from elements of the pre-Roman settlement and of Saxon huts in the era postdating the Roman town, much new information about the Roman city of Durovernum was recovered – about its defences, its street layout, some of its public buildings (including baths and a theatre), and parts of private houses. As with all the best archaeology, the results were obtained through meticulous attention to stratigraphy and to the observation of the smallest details. The importance of the latter, for example, Sheppard underlined in his summary of results for the general public, *Roman Canterbury: the city of Durovernum*.

In 1955 he was appointed Director of Excavations at Verulamium, where major archaeological investigation was necessary in advance of the widening of a road running through the heart of the Roman city. The research was to continue there for seven years. The importance of these excavations is hard to overestimate. They rewrote completely, with a wealth of intricate detail, the history of the development of Verulamium as a Roman city, hugely amplifying and in part overthrowing the conclusions of Wheeler's excavations there two decades before. They were among the largest excavations of their time, with up to a hundred diggers on site on any one day – many who later went on to distinguished academic careers of their own cut their archaeological teeth, as it were, under Sheppard's guidance (and that of his trusted supervisors) at Verulamium. Then, from 1958, Sheppard pioneered the use of what we now call open-area excavation, instead of the box-grid system of trenches favoured by Wheeler with which Sheppard's Verulamium excavations had started. Nor must we forget that it was Sheppard's invitation to Martin Aitken, who traced the buried line of Verulamium's earliest urban defences (the so-called '1955 ditch'), that resulted in a very early and triumphantly successful application of what we now call geophysics. Sheppard was responsible also for devising at Verulamium a new technique for rolling mosaics entire onto a drum when lifting them, rather than cutting them up and so partly mutilating them, as had

hitherto been the practice. The Verulamium excavations also marked a watershed in developing new ways of saving and raising large areas of fallen wall plaster, masterminded by Norman Davey, and building on techniques first pioneered only a few years before in the recovery of painted wall plaster from the Roman villa at Lullingstone. In all these aspects, Sheppard's work at Verulamium made a colossal impact on Romano-British archaeology, reinforced by his magisterial publication of it between 1972 and 1984 in three immensely detailed volumes of reports.

The other excavations that Sheppard conducted over the course of his career, alone or in partnership with others, read like a roll-call of some of the key sites in Romano-British archaeology – the Roman villa at Bignor, where the successive building phases of the site explored by Samuel Lysons were for the first time established and dated; Dorchester-on-Thames, where an especial highlight was the evidence for sub-Roman occupation, with early Saxon *Grubenhäuser* erected beside still-used Roman streets; Longthorpe near Peterborough, still the only 'vexillation' fortress of the early Roman military campaign period to have been extensively excavated; Brandon Camp in Herefordshire, on the Welsh border, another early military base, with a ramshackle collection of timber buildings which bucked the usual trend of orderly military planning; Bowes, a fort at the eastern end of the Stainmore Pass, where the defences and part of the interior were examined and a long sequence of occupation established; and Strageath in Perthshire, where a fort occupied in both the Flavian and two Antonine periods was extensively investigated. There is indeed, much to be grateful for.

Up until the mid-sixties Sheppard was mainly known for his excavations and for publications that were related to them or were concerned with wider issues arising directly out of them. In 1967, a year after his transfer from London to become Professor of the Archaeology of the Roman Empire here in Oxford, and a Fellow of this College, was published his great book, *Britannia: a history of Roman Britain*. This work immediately established itself as the definitive statement of its subject, universally acknowledged in reviews. The subtitle is important. Sheppard firmly believed that archaeological evidence was to be evaluated for the information it could provide for social, economic and military history, and that, along with literary, epigraphic and numismatic evidence, the overall goal was to construct a narrative which took due account of all forms of available evidence. It was the first full-length study of Roman Britain since Collingwood's of thirty years before, and its impact on the subject was huge.

Sheppard issued revised editions at intervals; the fourth and last, handsomely produced in hardback and in a slipcase, and now with 20 images in colour, was published in 1999, over three decades after the first. It is, however, a matter of regret that this was issued by the Folio Society for its members only, and not in a commercial publication at all. As a result this edition, which is rarely cited, did not receive the widespread circulation that it deserved at the time, and still deserves. There have been many attempts at writing monographic accounts of Roman Britain since, but not one of them has established itself as having quite the same *auctoritas*, quite the same level of judicious balance, as Sheppard's *Britannia*. Its place as a 'classic overview' in the historiography of Roman Britain is secure.

Another aspect of the impact of Sheppard's contribution to scholarship was his extraordinary selflessness, his willingness to give huge amounts of his time to help his colleagues, to get their work to completion, in order to enrich Roman and especially Romano-British studies as a whole. This took many different forms. The most obvious was his contribution as Founding Editor of the journal *Britannia*, the first volume of which appeared in 1970. He served as Editor for ten years, twice the length of the tenure of his successors. Almost more remarkably, he served on the journal's editorial committee for 40 years, resigning only in 2009 at the age of 93. The deployment of his literary skills and his desire to polish and improve the work submitted by others, as well the many other myriad tasks that fall to anyone who takes on an editorial role, was one that he greatly enjoyed. In the same vein was his work on preparing the final English text for publication of a volume in the 'History of the Provinces of the Roman Empire' series (of which his *Britannia* in 1967 had been the first), that on Pannonia and Upper Moesia. Another valuable service was the annual round-up of 'Sites explored' that he compiled for *Britannia* for ten years, from 1983 to 1992. Then there was the writing-up of work conducted by others, such as Sir Ian Richmond's re-excavation in 1961 of the Romano-British church at Silchester, or Donald Atkinson's explorations from 1929 to 1934 of the forum, baths and south defences at Caistor St Edmund. Perhaps most remarkable of all was his readiness to travel hundreds of miles to visit the excavations of others, putting his vast archaeological experience at their disposal – a vivid illustration of his unselfish personality, the strength of his resolve to serve, and the sheer quantity of his indefatigable energy.

In 1983, when Sheppard retired from his Oxford Chair, he was presented with a Festschrift, *Rome and her northern provinces* (and he was to receive another on

his ninetieth birthday in 2006), in which John Wachter, one of its editors, wished Sheppard and Janet a long and happy retirement. Sheppard's productivity in the period that ensued was little short of astounding. This was no *otium* of the traditional kind: no less than twenty-one books, an astonishing statistic, and over two dozen major papers, flowed from his pen (some in collaboration with others) in the 28 years between 1983 and his last publication in 2011. The books included some of the final reports of excavations I have already mentioned – two of the three volumes on Verulamium, the last two reports, written in collaboration with Sally Stow, on Canterbury, and the definitive account of Strageath, jointly with John Wilkes. Another was *Roman Britain from the Air* (1983), co-authored with Sheppard's close friend of many years, J. K. St Joseph. Stunningly illustrated with a selection of the latter's air photographs taken over the previous three decades, this book represented the fulfilment of a project originally conceived some twenty years earlier. The volume, beautifully produced on coated art paper, remains a compelling and extremely useful introduction to the Romano-British landscape, of continuing value to students and experts alike. A further collaborative product of Sheppard's retirement was his monograph with Frank Lepper on Trajan's Column, to which Sheppard contributed above all his expertise on Roman army organization, arms and equipment, and on their Dacian counterparts, as well as on the organization of the Trajanic province of Dacia. Sheppard's final book, 203 pages on his excavations at Bowes fort with Brian Hartley, was issued when he was 93. His last paper was published, as I mentioned, in 2011, when he was 95, an astonishing 72 years after his first, which appeared in 1939.

One project of Sheppard's retirement, however, stands out from the rest. His achievement in bringing the whole of *Roman Inscriptions of Britain Volume II* to fruition in eight separate fascicules in six short years, after many years of delay at the hands of others, was truly *mirabile dictu*. It was carried out with the help of Roger Tomlin, in an extraordinary surge of academic activity between the late 1980s and the mid-1990s. To put the amount of work required into perspective – had the separate fascicules been published as a single volume, *RIB II* would have constituted a book of 1,329 pages, bigger than *RIB I*. Its publication meant not only that Britannia is unique among Roman provinces in having its entire corpus of inscriptions, including its *instrumentum domesticum*, so readily accessible in one place; it also gave Sheppard immense satisfaction that he was able to oversee the completion of a project (to compile a corpus of every known Roman inscription in Britain) that had been originally envisaged by Francis Haverfield – that other Lancing schoolmaster and later Oxford

professor, whose work he so much admired, and who had trodden a similar path to Sheppard two generations earlier.

The impact of Sheppard's scholarship was of course felt internationally, and he was frequently invited to French colloquia (and he also excavated in France, most notably with Brian Hartley at Lezoux); but his closest Continental links were with Germany, where he was Corresponding Fellow of the German Archaeological Institute, and where he remained life-long friends with Harald von Petrikovits, one-time Director of the Rhineland Archaeological Service and of the Rheinisches Landesmuseum in Bonn, and with his successor, Christoph Rüger. In editorials for early issues of the journal *Britannia*, he drew attention to important German scholarship which anyone interested in Roman Britain should read, and it is not surprising that he could count among his pupils German students who made the pilgrimage to Oxford to study with him, pupils who have since gone on to distinguished careers in the German archaeological service and in German academia. One of them, Michael Mackensen, is happily with us here today.

Sheppard's impact as a teacher was profound, and he supervised numerous doctoral theses over the years that were published after due revision as books. One of his most important legacies was his demand from his students for the same lucidity and clarity of expression that he showed in his own writing. The words that he himself used (in a lecture delivered in this College in 1987) to describe R.G. Collingwood could apply equally to himself: 'he could write English like an angel'. He was in fact a great stickler for the correct usage of the English language. When, over forty years ago, I used in a draft for him the word 'hopefully' in its now widely accepted modern sense, he rebuked me in the margin with the comment, 'ghastly neologism – avoid.' I have never used it since. Like all great teachers he dispensed wisdom in unobtrusive ways – words of advice were often offered without his always realising the significance of their impact on his students. He strove for excellence in all that he did himself, and expected his pupils to have the same high goals.

Being a student of Sheppard was therefore always demanding, but also immensely rewarding: he was quick to give encouragement where encouragement was due. For those of us with offices in the attics of the Institute of Archaeology in Beaumont Street, who wondered whether or not he was in the building, one only had to open the door to find out – the evidence being the unmistakable whiff of pipe tobacco smoke rising up the stairs. I can't

vouch from my own personal experience for certain eccentricities reported by diggers and fellow students, for example that his trousers were sometimes held up by a tie serving as a surrogate belt, or of his picking up sausages by spearing them by a six-inch archaeological nail fished out of his pocket, or his attending a Christmas party here in Oxford wearing a pretend laurel wreath consisting of a tie to which paper leaves had been stapled; but I do recall one occasion, after a day's digging at Bowes, when he invited me along to what was my first visit to the Bowes Moor Roman signal station nearby (Sheppard wanted to test its intervisibility with the fort we were digging), when he said disarmingly that my role was to flatten the barbed wire fences that would lie in our path. Once these were safely negotiated, he was as ever the consummate teacher: his ability to read and interpret an archaeological landscape in the field was awesome.

Sheppard's outstanding career was recognized by his peers in many ways – including his election to the Presidency of various societies, the award of the Gold Medal by the Society of Antiquaries for distinguished achievement, election to fellowship of the British Academy, his appointment as a CBE, and honorary doctorates from the Universities of Leeds, Leicester and Kent. Sheppard bestrode Romano-British studies like a colossus, inheriting the mantle of the leadership of the field worn in turn by Francis Haverfield, R.G. Collingwood and Sir Ian Richmond before him, and wearing it with enormous distinction. His legacy to the subject will long endure. And those who were privileged to have been his pupils and close friends will remember, with gratitude and deep affection, the sagacity of his advice, his ever-present sense of humour, his many personal kindnesses, and the warmth of his humanity.

Mark Hassall

My first meeting with Sheppard

I was very fortunate as a young boy in my early teens at Lord Williams's Grammar School Thame, to have been befriended by a distinguished classical archaeologist based at Newnham College in Cambridge, Jocelyn Toynbee. It was Jocelyn Toynbee, along with Beatrice de Cardi, then secretary of the Council for British Archaeology, who arranged for me to give a short talk at the January meeting of the CBA in 1954 in the rooms of the Society of Antiquaries in Burlington House. I spoke about a discovery I had made while field-walking – of a Romano-British pottery mould. My achievement in addressing the Great and the Good on the CBA, 'hit the headlines' in the National Press – well, something like that – and one of the newspaper accounts was picked up by the headmaster of Lord Williams's, Hugh Mullens. Now Mullens was the uncle of a young woman named Janet Hoare, and Janet was the close friend of Sheppard – indeed half a dozen years later she married him. Mullens invited Sheppard to come to Thame and speak to us boys about Roman Britain and afterwards he invited the 13-year-old Mark to join him and Sheppard – and Janet too no doubt – for dinner. As a result I participated in Frere's excavations at Verulamium along with a group of other boys from Lord Williams's, including my brother Tom. Later I went on to study under him at the London Institute, but here I shall only speak about the excavations.

Verulamium

Somehow the shadow of Wheeler always seemed to be present. Through the new medium of television he was very well known. I remember hearing one old man in a pub at St Albans saying of him: "This Sir Mortimer, he be the son of his father", little realising that they were one and the same man! At least once Wheeler came round to visit the excavations and Sheppard introduced a group of us to the Great Man. I was so overcome at the great honour that I blanched, and Wheeler addressed me with the words "You are the pale face here".

On this or another occasion when Wheeler visited, he was buttonholed by old Mrs Frere, Sheppard's mother, who had a small stall selling rusty Roman nails or broken potsherds. She hadn't the faintest notion who the great man

was and she attempted the 'hard sell', at which Wheeler feigned alarm and tried to get away.

Then there were the wheel-barrows. These had names in white painted on their sides – names all of which I have forgotten – except one: it was called 'The Single Wheeler' – thus was the great man immortalised. [There was also 'The Damn Yankee'.]

Life on the excavation

This was pretty basic. We lived in tents just off the lane down to a ford across the river, and the river itself was the only provision we had for washing facilities. Its purity was not improved by the horses and ponies which periodically crossed the ford.

We ate communally in the dig hut. We used to have sing-songs there, and I can still remember some of them: Geoff Dannell was a leading singer; among other numbers were *The Rajah of Astrakhan*, *Was you ever saw*, *'Twas on the Good Ship Venus* and *Oh, the Sons of the Prophet*. Then I remember on one occasion when a photographer turned up from the somewhat risqué (by the standards of the 1950s) periodical *Reveillé* with some scantily-clad young ladies to take photos of them posing as pinups around the wheel-barrows: an embarrassed Sheppard had to welcome them while we all hung out of the windows of the dig hut laughing.

Subsequent Excavations

I shall just mention three more excavations.

Dorchester-on-Thames [1962–63]

My parents were away from our home at Wheatley near Oxford during the excavations and Sheppard and Janet came and stayed with us, where Janet did the cooking. Sheppard then drove Tom and myself over to Dorchester in his vintage Rolls. I now quote from the account written by Tom: "It happened that the excavation coincided with the Great Mail-Train Robbery. The public were on high alert for suspicious characters and the presence of 'three rough youths' in an unlikely vehicle was duly reported to the police by a sharp-eyed member of the public. Janet Frere was accordingly interviewed by the police and had to explain the situation."

Lezoux [1963]

Another excavation in which my brother and I participated about now was at the samian manufacturing site of Lezoux, near Clermont Ferrand, which Frere co-directed with Brian Hartley. I remember here Marcel, an old local with a plumb bob which he called his 'pondule' and used in the manner of a dowsing rod to discover buried structures as he claimed, and the maid, Josette, at 'Les Voyageurs' where we stayed, and who stuck little notices on the backs of unsuspecting victims with the aid of burrs. The notes said things like: "Shut up the hens the cock is loose" and, on Sheppard's back I think, "My carburettor works on Beaujolais".

Ivinghoe Beacon [1963-5]

Ivinghoe is an Iron Age hillfort near Chessington, Buckinghamshire. This excavation was directed by Sheppard and Alwyn M. Cotton, or 'Molly' Cotton as she was called, whom my Father had known during the war. There was also a friendly local antiquarian Jack Head, the author of a book on the archaeology of Buckinghamshire, who sometimes entertained Tom and me in the pub when he would say: "It's very kind of you boys to let me buy you a drink!" and to quote from Tom again: "The site was near Chessington where the Glasgow to Euston mail-train had been stopped and £2.3 million stolen. The farmer in whose barn the diggers were camping was the local Justice of the Peace and the Great Mail-Train robbers were brought before him in turn as they were caught".

Though I subsequently dug with Sheppard and John Wilkes at Strageath, I shall conclude with Ivinghoe Beacon, and if I may be allowed to finish things off from my own personal point of view, I will just mention that as a result of getting to know Molly I joined the excavations at Francolise near Capua in Italy and, through contacts made there, went on to participate in the excavations by The Institute of Fine Arts at the University of Long Island at Knidos near Bodrum in SW Turkey. Which is where I met Catherine Ward Perkins, who was to become my wife – and we are now grandparents!

Roger Goodburn*

Sheppard was born at Graffham near Petworth in Sussex on 23rd August 1916. He was the eldest of three sons, and the family came from East Anglia, where his great-great-great-grandfather was John Frere of Roydon, of palaeolithic Hoxne fame. As with many of the family, Sheppard's father Noel worked in the colonial service, mainly in Sierra Leone.

Sheppard's prep school was Earlywood at Ascot. When he first arrived there in his Aunt Joan's Model-T Ford, he remembered being embarrassed because everyone else had come in Rolls Royces or Bentleys. He started Latin and Greek there, but did not enjoy being forced to have Greek lessons by post in the holidays. He did, however, then win a scholarship to Lancing, where he became interested in archaeology, and where B.W.T. Handford, to whom *Britannia* is dedicated, had founded the archaeological society. This was named for Francis Haverfield, who had once taught there. When the boys were "turned out of doors on Sunday afternoons", Sheppard's choice was to explore nearby sites such as Park Brow, Cissbury and Lancing temple, which also kindled his interest in ancient ceramics. He used Curwen's books, which he said he found 'inspirational'. Later, he got to know the Curwens, Elliot and E.C. On one occasion he was invited to lunch, during which old Mrs Curwen asked Sheppard: "Are you Saved?" to which, uncharacteristically indecisive, he mumbled "I don't know", which did not go down very well.

He read Classics and Ancient History at Magdalene College, Cambridge. There, the Master, A.B. Ramsay, made his scholars do "saying lessons" i.e. learning a Greek or Latin text, adding twenty lines more each week. Even in 1935 this was considered old-fashioned, but Sheppard never regretted his learning by heart. Even though Demosthenes evaporated over the years, he could to his latter days recite long pieces of the *Aeneid* and the writings of Tacitus. In his early reading, Sheppard's critical faculties were already sharp: in one of his books the opinion of an eminent scholar is quoted, and receives Sheppard's marginal note "But it is well-known that he ought to be locked up". In the undergraduate archaeological society he made friends with

*Based on tributes delivered at Sheppard's Funeral in All Saints Church, Marcham on 12 March 2015 and the Memorial Service in All Souls College, Oxford on 16 May 2015.

Rainbird Clarke and dug for Grahame Clark at Peacock's Farm. He also went digging in 1938, not as was fashionable, with Mortimer Wheeler at Maiden Castle, but with Gerhard Bersu at Little Woodbury.

After Cambridge, he taught at Epsom College (1938–40), where he founded the school archaeological society and had his first involvement in Surrey archaeology, digging at Highdown with A.E. Wilson. He later excavated at the Chatley Farm, Cobham villa (sometimes with the help of his brother David). He also became honorary editor of the *Surrey Archaeological Collections*.

In 1939 Sheppard excavated with Kathleen Kenyon at the Wrekin, and was given the challenging daily task of driving the ancient expedition car, laden with provisions, up the steep, grassy slopes to the summit. During his war service in London, Kathleen Kenyon encouraged him to make a map and survey of bombed sites in Southwark; whilst doing this he came close to being arrested as an enemy agent, but disentangled himself by getting the authorities to ring Philip Corder at the Society of Antiquaries. Kathleen Kenyon also encouraged Sheppard to organize the Sussex, Surrey and Kent Regional Group of the newly-formed Council for British Archaeology.

Sheppard's training in methods of excavation derived mainly from Bersu (Little Woodbury), K.M. Kenyon (the Wrekin, Southwark) and A.E. Wilson (Highdown.) He never worked with Wheeler, but adopted Wheeler's method of relating stratigraphical layer numbers through section layer-labels and note-book entries. He also used Wheeler's draughtsmanship as a model, but developed his own style. His training in ancient history was a powerful influence, persuading him of the need to tie archaeology with history as far as possible.

He found occasional opportunities to go and dig on bombed sites in Canterbury with Audrey Williams, and when she moved to Verulamium Museum in 1946, he was invited to direct the Canterbury excavations. At the same time he began teaching at Lancing. During the school holidays (Christmas included) he excavated in Canterbury and returned to school each term with tea-chests of finds to be sorted and drawn in his spare time. During

term, ex-pupils recount that setting them work in class gave him the opportunity to keep up his reading of *Antiquity* and other journals.

His move to Lancing was particularly fortunate because he became a housemaster and met the sister of one of his prefects – Janet, whom he married in 1961.

In 1955 he succeeded Mortimer Wheeler at the London Institute and became Reader in the Archaeology of the Roman Provinces. He could now concentrate fully on his work in archaeology. The first of his seven seasons of excavation at Verulamium took place in that same year, and he continued work at Canterbury until 1960. Sheppard's teaching in the Archaeology of the Western Provinces led to the writing of his history of Roman Britain, *Britannia*.

His long-standing interest in late prehistory included numerous excavations, mostly in Britain, but also at the hillfort of Charlat in the Corrèze, with Molly Cotton. Also, together with Derek Allen, he started up the national index of Iron Age coins. But as time elapsed, archaeology became increasingly complex, and increasing specialization was necessary. Sheppard accordingly concentrated his interests increasingly on the Roman period. After the war, he had become a close friend of Ian Richmond, whom he identified as an important formative influence on his thinking. He also owed much to his friendship with Brian Hartley, with whom he discussed his work and excavated at Lezoux.

In 1966 Sheppard was invited to Oxford University to take up the Chair of the Archaeology of the Roman Empire, which he held until 1983, with a Fellowship at All Souls College. His teaching in London had included splendid lectures on Gaul and Germany. Now it included more easterly provinces, as far as the Euphrates.

During this time, the family extended warm hospitality to many visiting academics, including some from the eastern bloc. The cultural differences there were illuminated by one professor who arrived and was shown up to his room, but failed to appear for supper. Eventually Sheppard went and

knocked on his door, which was opened by a figure clad in pyjamas..... He thought that he had been sent to bed!

On the other hand, during a visit to the east to give a lecture, he deposited his brief-case in the office before being taken to inspect various sites. On returning at the end of the day, he suddenly remembered the case. The reply "What case?" led to Sheppard's comment that someone had presumably had the later use of a jolly good lecture.

His various expeditions to Gaul had a gastronomic aspect: one conference fed by the catering college near Strasbourg resulted in his triumphal return home with the chef's recipe for a superb dessert, with which Janet delighted many of their guests.

In Germany, his excavation alongside those of the Bonn Museum employed current British methods. The German workmen were amazed by the holes and protuberances which Sheppard's site produced; their finely-honed shovels always produced a beautifully even surface in the sandy soil for each 5cm level, whatever the archaeology..... The weather was extremely hot, and the early-morning glass of schnapps proffered by the men drew his response 'Glorious oblivion!'. He sometimes had to 'check some proofs' in the site hut.

The publication of his Verulamium and Canterbury excavations were heavy tasks, and even Sheppard's capacity for sustained hard work did not allow him to diversify as far as he would have wished into other fields of the Roman Empire: his interests remained centred largely on Roman Britain.

Sheppard's interest in the Roman army was illustrated by a number of excavations such as Bowes (with Brian Hartley) and Longthorpe (with Kenneth St Joseph). In 1973 he was invited to direct the Scottish Universities Field-school of Archaeology in succession to Anne Robertson, who had excavated at Birrens and Cardean. The site now chosen was the fort at Strageath, near Crieff. The excavations lasted until 1986, nine of the seasons under Sheppard's direction.

At a reception for the well-wishers of the excavations, including Lady Jane, the landowner and Mr Brown, the tenant farmer, Sheppard was distributing to the company glasses of sherry from a tray. When he came to Mr Brown and asked would he care for a glass of sherry, Mr Brown swiftly eyed the tray and exclaimed, "Ah'm a *whisky* man". So Sheppard dug in his pocket, went to bar and produced the dram.

The guiding committee arranged for evening lectures by various distinguished visitors. One notable occasion was when Kenneth St Joseph flew into Scone and went over to the Cultoquhey Hotel to talk about his new discovery of Durno, probably Agricola's camp on the eve of *mons Graupius*.

His draughtsmanship was superb – derived especially from Ian Richmond and partly from Wheeler. Janet was sometimes roped in to provide architectural drawings. (Her inclination to digging, however, was limited to Bignor).

Sheppard's formal retirement from Oxford University brought little change in the volume of his archaeological labours. In 1988 Frank Lepper and he produced a book about the reliefs on Trajan's Column in Rome. They describe it in the preface as an 'old men's book', backing up their claim by saying that on a trip to Bucharest in 1979, they were mistaken for participants in a geriatric convention; but they did follow this up by hoping that their reader 'will detect more evidence of mature wisdom than of senile amnesia'.

Britannia, first published in 1967, has maintained its indispensability through four editions over 50 years. He said recently that "it was a lot of hard writing". Down the years, sometimes an enquiry on some point would prompt him to say "What does Frere say?" and sometimes, leafing through, "Damn good book this". It is; and when in the 1990s he was approached by the Folio Society asking whether he knew of an important book which they ought to republish, his confident reply was "Mine!" (They did).

Other writing continued and one of his very recent productions was a stout defence and justification of one aspect of his interpretation of the Verulamium discoveries.

Sheppard had a great ability to grasp the essentials of a question. In *Britannia* (1st ed, 1967), 34, he discussed Caesar's campaigns in Kent and suggested that the Roman camp built after the capture of Bigbury would perhaps be found at Harbledown. As recently as October 2010 he came to supper, bringing the new *Kent Archaeological Newsletter* 86. Placing it on the table, he opened it at page 15 to show a LiDAR picture of polygonal earthworks on Harbledown, described there as the *object* of Caesar's assault. He didn't speak, but having also had the newsletter that day, I responded "Caesar's Camp!" He grinned. Doubtless time will tell.

Sheppard always kept himself abreast of current work, which included many visits to excavations. His reputation pretty well always guaranteed a warm reception. On one occasion, however, a young lady who clearly did not recognize him, extended a rather frosty greeting when he appeared on site. On enquiring for the director, and being asked who he was, mention of his name instantly electrified the said young lady and she hurtled off to find the boss. Sheppard grinned and said "I do rather enjoy it when that happens".

Some of his last visits were to the current excavations at Dorchester-on-Thames. Having excavated there in 1962–63, he was gratified to see what the new areas beyond some of his trenches were revealing – and at one point to enquire courteously whether more sections might be useful

Sheppard was a great scholar, a great friend.